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## The Miller's Ghost

A Story of Garibaldi and the  
One Thousand

By F. A. MITCHEL

The union of the Italian states that occurred during the middle of the last century was accomplished by the united efforts of three different leaders who, strange to say, were not at all in accord, and in the case of two of them there was great antagonism. These three men were Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia; Count Cavour, his prime minister, and General Garibaldi. The king acted as a rallying head for the Italian people, Cavour's splendid diplomacy prevented the interference of foreign powers, and Garibaldi struck the blow.

When Garibaldi, at the head of 1,000 volunteers, landed on the Sicilian shore to support the revolution in that island and advanced eastward he fought a battle in which he was victorious, and the supporters of his enemy, the king of Naples, commonly called Bomba, retreated to Palermo, where the king's main army was located, protected by a fleet of war vessels in the harbor.

During this fight, when Garibaldi was advancing, an Italian soldier, Giuseppe Guardet, was captured by Bomba's troops. This Guardet was as much of a genius in a small strategic way as was his general in leading armies. Guardet was sent forward with other prisoners in the direction of Palermo that they might not be retaken by their advancing comrades. But in any event soldiers in retreat do not make the best of guards, and Guardet, who had been wounded, pretending that he could not keep up with his captors, lagged behind and when he saw that he was unobserved by those hurrying on ahead of him sank down behind some bushes.

If the prisoner had been in the rear instead of in advance of the retreating army he would have needed only to wait for Garibaldi to come up. As it was, he must conceal himself till the main body and rear guard of the royal troops had passed on. As soon as he ceased to hear the confused sounds of the guard ahead of him he sprang up, notwithstanding his wound, which was not in a vital part, and ran as fast as his legs could carry him into a wood beside the road on which he had been marching. Sicily is a mountainous country, and he was on a slope at the foot of mountains, a stream running through it down to the plains below. Following this stream he came to a water mill.

Guardet found the mill deserted except for a donkey hitched to a post, on whose back were several bags of flour evidently intended for delivery. Inside grain and flour were in bags and in heaps.

The fugitive, seeing that he had found a good hiding place, threw himself down on the bags of flour to rest and, being exhausted, fell asleep. He was soon awakened by voices and, starting, ran up a pair of stairs to the upper part of the mill, where he found a large heap of flour. The voices came nearer till he could hear them directly below. Guardet burrowed into the flour, leaving only a breathing space for his nose at the back part of the pile, where it would not likely be noticed. The comers were chattering below, and the hidden soon learned that they were Neapolitan soldiers. He had been missed almost as soon as he had dropped behind, and these men had been sent back for him. Noticing that the mill was a good hiding place, they searched it. When they came up the stairs Guardet withdrew even his nose under the flour and held his breath. They did not think of looking for a man in such a place, and Guardet had the satisfaction of hearing them go away.

As soon as he was free to come out from his hiding place he did so, while as the flour that had shielded him. Going into a little room where the miller kept his accounts, he found a fragment of looking glass fastened to the wall and by it saw that his face was like that of a corpse. Wiping the flour from his forehead with his hand, which was covered with blood from his wound, he left a smudge of blood congealed with flour. Then the idea of playing the part of a ghost, if necessary to effect his escape, occurred to him, and he dabbed himself here and there with blood, and with some ink he found beside the miller's account books blackened the sockets of his eyes.

Surveying his image in the mirror, he lost all fear of capture, for, knowing well the superstition of Italians, he felt sure he could easily put to flight a whole army of them.

The sun was now low behind the mountains, and Guardet concluded to sally forth with a view to working his way backward to rejoin his comrades. Leaving the mill, he saw the donkey still patiently standing tied to the post, and it occurred to him that there was no need for him to walk when he could so well ride. To heighten the ghostly effect he emptied the bags of flour over his head, with the exception of one bag, which he left in its place for a saddle. Then, mounting, he guided the little beast down to the road.

There he hesitated. If he rode toward Garibaldi's army and failed to frighten the coming Neapolitans it would be all up with him. It might be

better in the end to go the other way. Being of a venturesome disposition, the latter course pleased him the better, and he decided to go with the current instead of against it.

He had not proceeded far before he heard the jabber of voices, the rattle of side arms against canteens and tin cups, denoting that some soldiers of the retreating army were ahead of him. Thinking they would afford him a good opportunity to make his experiment of playing ghost, he urged his charger on till he came in sight of four men, whom he suspected to be those who had been sent back to find him. Hearing the patter of the donkey's little hoofs on the road, they turned.

For a moment they stood paralyzed. "Santa Maria!" whispered one to the other. "It's the miller. He must have been murdered."

"Go back," cried out Guardet, "and bury me! King Bomba's men have left my body in a thicket near my mill. I will haunt you till you place it underground and put a cross over it."

As he spoke he kept on at the same pace. The soldiers recoiled before him to the side of the road and as soon as he had passed began to consult as to what they should do. Not one of them dared to stand against the threat he had made in the miller's name, and, trembling, they retraced their steps and spent hours in a fruitless search for his body.

Meanwhile Guardet, encouraged at his success, rode on, keeping at a safe distance behind the advance of the retreating army, till he came to the top of a declivity from which he could look down on Palermo. He saw King Bomba's flag flying over the palace, the Neapolitan ships of war in the harbor, besides several war vessels flying the British flag. He noticed the enemy's camps and, considering their extent, could not conceive how his general could prevail against them. He observed their positions and saw that they were on the farther side of the city, while the declivity on which he stood led down to the narrow streets on the hither side that had been left without protection. All this he considered, and it occurred to him that it would be well for his general to know what was before him.

By this time darkness had come on, and he determined to take advantage of it to ride back to inform Garibaldi of what he had seen.

There was another road leading toward the revolutionists which joined the one on which they were advancing. Guardet made for this road. Just as he was about to ride into it, looking over an open space, he saw the dark forms of men marching westward.

"Aha!" exclaimed Guardet to himself. "A force is moving by this road either to strike the general on the flank or cut him off. We shall see about this."

For some distance the road on which these troops were marching lay over partly open ground, and Guardet hovered on their flank. He appeared now and again to the soldiers as a white mass moving in the same direction as themselves. He was minded to block the road before them to delay or turn them back, but he remembered that their leader would be at their head and, being of superior intelligence, was not likely to be frightened by an apparition. So he fell back to the rear with a view to detaching some portion of the force. When the dawn was far enough advanced to enable the troops to see him he put himself on the road between the main body and a company marching a short distance in the rear. A bomb dropping among them could not have more effectually scattered them.

Without waiting for them to investigate him Guardet, who every moment was becoming more convinced of the importance of bearing the information he possessed to his general, crossed from the road on which the Neapolitans were marching to the one on which Garibaldi was advancing and during the morning took position at a point where the general must pass. He had not waited long when the head of the revolutionary column came in sight. Guardet rode to meet them, and the skirmish line melted away like ice under the rays of a hot sun. Guardet kept on causing a commotion in the little army till he approached the general and his staff.

"What's this?" the general demanded. "Who are you who have rigged yourself like a phantom?"

"I am Private Giuseppe Guardet, taken in yesterday's fight by King Bomba's men. I escaped and hid in a mill. That's what gives me a ghostly appearance. I have been to the crest of the hill overlooking Palermo and have noted several features that it may be well for you to know."

"What are they?"  
"There must be 20,000 troops in Palermo, but they are all near the palace at the other end of the city. There is a fleet of war vessels in the harbor, some of them bearing the English flag."

"English?"  
"Yes, general."

"Go on."

"The part of the town nearest the foot of the declivity is unguarded. You may find an entrance on that side."

"Anything else?"  
"A force has been sent out to intercept you. It is marching by another road."

"They have gone on a fool's errand. Thank you, Private Guardet. You cut a ridiculous figure, but you have brought me valuable information."

The general rode on, and Guardet took position beside the road. As the soldiers passed, now knowing that he was harmless, he was greeted with shouts of laughter.

History tells how Garibaldi after a long fight on the streets of Palermo finally forced the evacuation of King Bomba's army, thus striking the first and the main blow for Italian unity.

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### A LITERARY RIDDLE.

Who Was It Wrote the Tragedy of "Troilus and Cressida?"

Andrew Lang has just propounded a puzzle in circumstantial evidence. "Who," he asks, "wrote 'Troilus and Cressida?'" You may answer, as you please, Shakespeare or Bacon. If you answer Bacon, Andrew Lang comes back with the query, "Would Bacon have said that Aristotle lived before the Trojan war?" Bacon was too learned a man to make such a mistake, which would be as bad as placing Abraham Lincoln among the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

If you answer Shakespeare, Andrew Lang shoots another query at you: "The author makes Ulysses and Achilles quote 'an author' and discuss a pretty long and strange passage from that author, who was Plato. How could Shakespeare have read Plato?" For Shakespeare knew no Greek, and in his day Plato had not yet been translated into English.

It is quite conceivable that Shakespeare might imagine that Plato and Aristotle lived many centuries before Homer, but it is inconceivable that the erudite Bacon should fall into such an error.

Andrew Lang does not pretend to solve the riddle. He frankly says, "I give it up."—New York World.

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